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Proberta



Roberte the Deuyll.





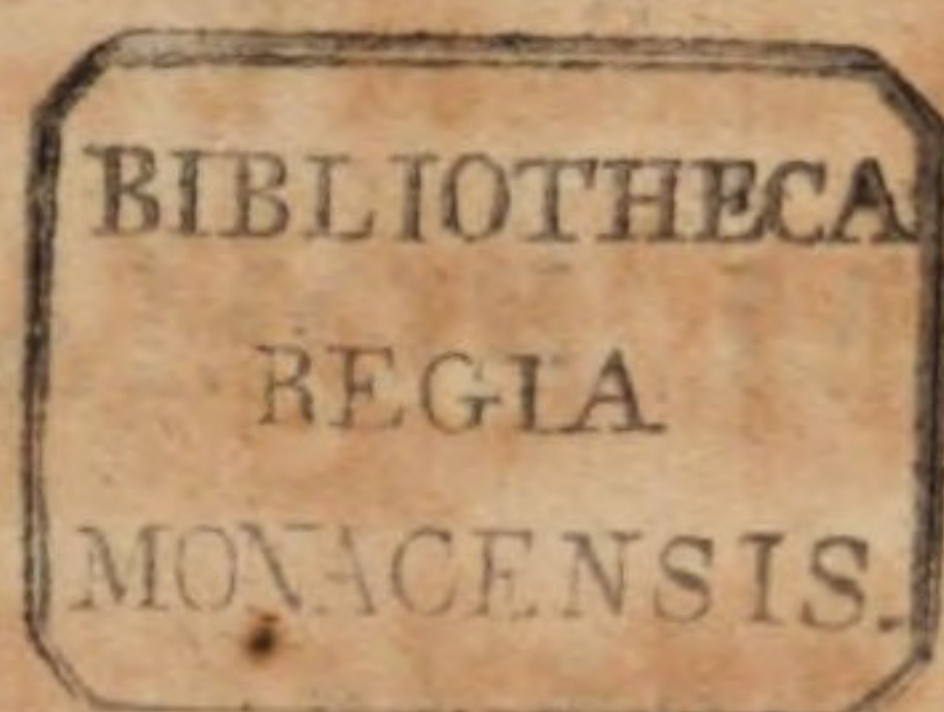
Here begynneth the lyfe of
Roberte the Deuy ll.

Roberte the Deuyll.
A
METRICAL ROMANCE,
FROM AN
Ancient Illuminated Manuscript.



LONDON:
PRINTED FOR EGERTON, WHITEHALL ;
CLARKE, BOND STREET ;
AND G. BARRETT, 289, HOLBORN.

1798.





ADVERTISEMENT.

THIS MS of "*Roberte the Deuyl*," appears to have been transcribed word for word, from an edition in quarto, printed either by *Wynken de Worde* or *Pynson*, of which I have seen a fragment consisting of six leaves ; these have been collated with the MS to which is prefixed this no

" No mention is made of this edition in
" Mr. Herbert's *Typographical Antiquities*.
" Nor have I ever seen a complete copy or
" heard of one : it is probable that the im-
" pression was destroyed in the Fire of Lon-
" don. There are no cuts in the fragment.

" The

“ The Drawings in the MS seem to be of
“ the time of Elizabeth or James I.

“ The MS, was formerly in the possession
of Mr. Ratcliffe.”

Mr. Herbert has, in p. 228 and 229 given
the contents of the several chapters, *as it*
seems a curiosity, from an edition by W. de
Worde, extant among Bp. More's books, in
the Public Library, Cambridge, (D. 5. 2.)
in prose, coinciding exactly in matter with
this, and finishing

“ Thus endeth the Life of Robert the Devil,

“ That was the Servant of our Lord,

“ And of conscience that was full evil :

“ Imprinted in London by Wynkyn the Worde.”

In Bibl. Rawlinsoniana No. 881, 22 Jan.
1727-8, is “ *The Famous Historical Life of*
“ *Robert II. Duke of Normandy, surnamed*
“ *for*

“ *for his monstrous birth and behaviour, Robin*
 “ *the Dibell, 4to. London 1599.*”

Robert II, the sixth Duke of Normandy was the son of Richard III, fifth Duke of Normandy, and father of William surnamed the Conqueror ; see the genealogical tables, as mentioned in Typog. Antiq. p. 978, note t. and A. Mundy's Brief Chronicle of the Success of Times, p. 343.

Mr. Warton in his Hist. of English Poetry, vol. I. p. 189, note n, says there is an old French prose Romance, *Robert le Diable*, first printed in 1496, often quoted by Carpentier ; and a French Morality in MS.
 “ *Comment il fut enjoient a Robert le Diable,*
 “ *filz du Duc de Normandie, pour ses Mesfaits,*
 “ *de faire le fol sans parler & depuis N. S. eut*
 “ *merci de lui*” Beauchamp Recherches Th.
 Fr. p. 109. Another Romance in French

on

on this subject is in vol. I. of the *Bibliothèque Bleue*, 3 vol. 12mo. *Liege*, 1787. These are probably the same Robert.

An old English Morality *on this tale* under the title of Robert Cicyll, was represented at the High Cross in Chester in 1529. A MS of which poem on vellum, is mentioned also by Mr. Warton to exist in Trinity College Library, MSS No. lvii. fol. But doubt if the Oxford MS has any connection with or resemblance to, The Story of "Roberte the Deuyl."

I. Herbert.

LONDON,

1st Sept. 1797.

THE

THE
LYFE

OF

Roberte the Deuyll.



YSTEN lordinges that of marueyles lyke
to heare

Of actes that were done sometyme in dede
By oure elders that before vs were
How some in myschiette their lyfe dyd leade
And in this boke may ye se yf that ye will rede
Of one Robert the deuyll, borne in Normandye
That was as uengeable a man as myght treade
On goddes grounde for he delyted all in tyranye.

A

A Duke

The Life of

A Duke sometyme in Normandye there was
 Full uertuous and deuoute in all hys lyuyng
 And in almose dedes, he yede in the waye of grace
 Of knyghtlye maners, and manfull in iustynge
 A Lordlye parfone, also courtes in euery thyng
 Hys dwellynge was at Nauerne vpon fayne
 At Chrystmas to honoure that holy tyme
 Open housholde he kepte, and to please God was
 [fayne.

A feaste he helde vpon a certayne daye
 Lordes come thyther of greate renowne
 And as they sate at dyner a knyght gan saye
 Vnto the Duke, and on hys knees kneled downe
 My lorde he sayd ye be owner of many a towne
 Yet haue ye no lady, nor none heyre
 After your dayes to reioyce youre grounde
 Therefore gett youe a princes that ys yonge and fayre.

Wyueles longe said the duke haue I taryed
 And lyued sole withoute any mate
 I se well yt ys youre wyll that I shoulde be maryed
 But yet woulde I have one to myne estate
 Accordynge, for and I shoulde take
 A Lady of nobler bloude than I am
 Or else of lower degre, soone shoulde I forsake
 Myne owne worship, and lyue lyke no man.

Yf

Yf I shoulde nowe wedde, and after repent
And lyue in sorowe and greate langoure
Than myght I saye that fortune had me sent
A chaunce mysfortunate, dystaynyng the floure
Of noble fame that shoulde encrease myne honoure
Wherefore lordes all, accordinge to prudence—
A foresight sayeth Salomon ys worthe treasoure
Yet be we ruled by fortune a Lady of excellence.

Than sayde to the Duke a Baron right bolde
My lorde I beseke youre grace of audyence
The Duke bade hym than saye what he woulde
In Burgonye sayd the Baron ys a ladye of reverence
Daughter to the Earle, yf yt please youre magnyfi-
Her for to take, there wyll no man saye naye [cence
Than to hys wordes the Duke gave credence
And sayde I knowe well the Earles doughter that lady
[gaye

In processe that lady to the Duke was maryed
A feaste was made of greate solempnytye
And twelve yeares together they taryed
In wealth and greate prosperytye
Goddess lawe they kepte and lyued vertuouflye
Yet chylde together had they none
They prayed to god with heart deuoutlye
Yf yt pleased hym for to sende them one.

Euer they prayed, but yt woulde not be
 In twelve yeare, chylde had they none
 Good dedes they dyd, and gave almose plentye
 Alacke said thys Ladye, shall I lyve alone
 Ofte she syghed and made greate mone
 That no chylde on her body woulde sprynge
 The good Duke also ever dyd grone
 And sayed good Jesu yet heare my cryenge

Lorde sende me a chylde the worlde to multiplye
 The Duke sayde, yf it be thy wyll
 My wyfe soroweth in her partye
 I feare that she wyll her selfe spyll
 Nothinge to the lorde that ys vnpossyble
 Nowe heare my prayer for loue of thy mother
 Sende me a chylde my petycion to fullfyll
 For to be myrry I desyre none other.

And on a tyme the Duke and Duches walked
 In a garden by them selfe alone
 Eche of them complayned and to other talked
 Howe they could have no chylde, and made much
 Full greate, and saide joy have we none [mone;
 I curse them saide the Duke that made the maryage
 For I had leuer to have lyued styll alone
 Chylde have I none, to reioyce myne herytage.

And



Roberte the Deuyll.

5

And said yf I had be maryed to another ladye
I knowe that I shoulde have had chyldren ynowe
The Duches aunswered as for her partye
Yf I had chaunged, verylye I trowe [youe
That chyldern I shoulde haue had; none haue I by
Let vs thanke god of that he doth vs fende
For I belave and do verelye trowe
That all oure sorowe he may yt amende.

So on a morowe the Duke went on huntynge
Hys hearte was fullfylled all with thought
In hys mynde chydde, and agayne god grudgynge
He fighed sore inwordlye and ofte
If he myght haue dyed, nothyng he rought
And sayde god loueth not me, all in dyspayre
Many women haue chyldren: but myne nought
Alas I trowe I shall haue none to be myne heyre.

The fende tempted soore the Duke tho
That he wyft not what to do nor saye
He left huntynge and homewarde he dyd go
And in to hys chaumber he toke the waye
So there the Duches at the same tyme laye
In as greate trouble as her husbande was
And to her lorde saide no chylde I beare maye
I am vnhappye, and therewith sayde alas.

He

He toke her in hys armes and her kyfte
And of that Lady he had all hys pleasure
And so begate a chylde; and yt not wyfte
The Duke to oure Lorde made hys prayer
For to sende hym a chylde for to gladde hys chere
The ladye saide the Deuyll nowe sende vs one
For god wyll not oure petycion heare
Therefore I trowe power hath he none

She sayde yf I be conceyued thys houre nowe
I geve yt to the deuyll both soule and bodye
Lo thys lady was nere folyfsh she I trowe
And fullfylled with greate obstynacye
Her owne soule there she put in greate ieopardye
For that houre she dyd conceyve with a man chylde
That whan he was borne lyued myscheuouflye
In thefte and murder lyke a tyraunte wylde

The tyme drewe so that nyne monethes was past
Than her tyme drewe on verye nye
At the houre of byrth she laboured fast
More than a moneth the boke doth specyfye
She had many throwes, with many a pytheous crye
Ladyes prayed for her, and gaue almese dede
They trowed verelye that she shoulde dye
With that our ladye wolde her helpe and spede.

And

Roberte the Deuyll.

7

And aſſone as Robert the deuyll was borne
The ſkyes waxed blacke that yt was wonder
And ſodenlye there began a full greate ſtorme
Rayne lyghtenyng with horrible thonder
They feared that the houſe woulde ryue a ſonder
Then blewe the wynde with greate power
That they wende the dome had he comen there
For downe wente wyndowes and euery doore.

Halfe the houſe the deuyll pulled downe
Yet at the laſt the wether waxed cleare
So for dreade thys lady laye in a ſowne
That greate wetherynge ſhe dyd fore feare;
Her gentlewomen bade her be of good chere
They told her that the wather was gone and paſt
Then to the church the chylde they dyd beare
And chryſtened yt Robert at the laſt.

He was as bygge the ſame daye
As ſome chylde of twelue monethes olde
When they came from Church he cryed all the
That yt made many hym to beholde [waye
Men ſade the chylde lokyd very bolde
Hys teeth grewe faſt when that he ſhoulde ſoucke
The noryſhe nypples ſo harde byte he woulde
That yt went then to her verye hearte roote.

There

There durst no woman geue hym sucke in faye
 For hys teeth grewe so peryllouslye
 That the noryshe nypples he bote a waye
 But than they woulde no more byde the ieopardye
 So with an horne he was fedde trewlye
 At the years ende he could bothe go and speake
 The elder he waxed, the more vnhappye
 Shrewdenes he woulde do bothe in house and streate

Hurte woulde he do to woman and man
 Vngracious was he daye and nyght
 Yf he amonge any chyldren came
 He woulde them hurte bothe scratche and byte
 Caste stones at theyr heades and fyght
 Breake their shynnes and put some eyes oute
 Lordes and ladyes of hym had greate delyght
 And wende yt had ben but wantonnes with oute
 [doute.

Mennes chyldren there he dyd mucche harme
 Of them he hurte shrewdelye many a one
 Breake bothe legge headde and arme
 Therefore he was beloued of none
 Hys companye chyldren forsoke euerychone
 They dyd flee fro hym as the deuyll fro holy water
 We wyll not haue hym amonge vs to come
 They sayd and he never do; we be the gladder.

For

Roberte the Deuyll.

9

For and the chyldern had seen hym come
In to the streate there for to playe
They woulde take theyr legges, and away runne
To theyr fathers as faste as they maye
Roberte the Deuyll dothe come they woulde saye
For younge chyldren gave hym that name
The chyldren hydde them in corners euery daye
And to runne from hym they woulde leaue their game.

And whan that he was aboute seuen yeare of aege
Hys father sette hym to scole in dede
With a dyscrete man and a sage
And prayed hys sonne that he woulde spede
For to learne bothe to wryte and reade,
And to Roberte the Deuyll hys father sayde
Sonne, yf thy lyfe in vertue thoue leade
Than wyll I with the be right well a payed.

Roberte the Deuyll wente to scole a lytell space
And euer he thought yt to longe ywys
He learned so that he was past all grace
Yt happened at the last he dyd amyffe
Hys master sayde Syr youe muste amende thys
Or elles forsothe ye shalbe beate
He sayde yf thou smyte me I wyll make the wyfshe
That thou thyne owne fleshe rather had eate.

B

Naye

Naye sayde hys master ye be to bolde
And toke a rodde for to chaste hym soone,
So to beate hym he sayde that he woulde
Roberte sawe what he purposed to done
And sayde ye were better lette me a lone
For with a dagger he thrust hym in to the bellye
That the bloude ran downe in to hys shone
So Slewe hys master, and let hym deade lye.

Whan Robert the Deuyll sawe hys master fall
He sayde he woulde go to scole no more
Hys boke he threwe agaynste the wall
The deuyll have the whyt that he was forye therfore
Alacke he made hys fathers hearte soore
When that he hys master had slayne
The Duches cursed the houre that he was bore
She sayde of hys companye no man vs fayne.

After that there woulde no pryft hym teache
He folowed uice, he woulde be ruled by none
And mocke pryftes whan they shoulde preache
For and he into the churche had gone
He would skorne the clearkes euerychone
And when they songe, come them behynde
So threwe dust in theyr mowthes by one and one
And some in theyr eyes to make them blynde.

Yf



Roberte the Deuyll.

11

Yf he sawe any men or women deuoutlye knele
For to serue God with theyr prayer, or stande
Pryuelye behynde them woulde he steale
And geue them a sowce with hys hande
To cause some to yell out theyr tongues longe
Or els he woulde make theyr heades go to grounde
Theyr neckes he hurte fore he was so stronge
And many olde folkes he caused to founde.

Yt was vnpossible for a clarke to write
The dedes he dyd that weare full vengeable
Then gentlemen that weare sadde and dyscrete
Complayned to hys father withoute fable
The Duke sayde, to chaste hym I am not able
Than Robert was brought before hym
He sayde: Sonne, thy dedes ben reproueable
Thou shamest me and all thy hole kynne.

Thow doest all thyng that dyspleaseth god
Thy scolemaster thou slewest with a knyfe
Because that he woulde haue beate the with a rodde
To the prystes in churche thou doest much greyfe
Full ofte I wyshe me oute of my lyfe
For thou of thy dedes arte so houghe and peryllouse
That chyldren younge bothe mayde and wyfe
Whych dothe the knowe geueth the theyr curse.

All one with hym, in at the one eare and out at
He was neuer the better daye nor nyght [the other
Hys olde laye kept, he woulde do none other
He was neuer glad but when he dyd fyght
To fwere and lye, theryn he had greate delyght
At last hys mother to her lorde spake
And sayd yt were best to make hym a knyght
Thys noble ordre let Robert the deuyll take.

For I trust then he wyll amende
Whan he that greate othe doth heare
Yt wyll make hym forye for that he dyd offende
And the workes of god hereafter for to leare
The Duke consented euen ryght there
And asked Robert yf he woulde lyue vnder awe
Of god, and the order of knight-hode beare
He aunswered I sett not thereby a strawe.

At the last Robert was made a knyght
Hys father bade hym take hede of hys othe
To dystroye wronge and to maynteyne right
And do trewe justyce for leefe or for lothe
For a knyght that in cheualrye goethe
Euer agaynst vice he muste fyght
And supporte trewe maydens, and he so dothe
He ys an inherytoure of heauen, goddes own knyght.
Robert

Robert aunswered, father at youre commandement
 I wyll thys greate order vpon me take
 But for to chaunge all myne entent
 As for my manners I wyll not forsake
 All men shall not ones me make
 For to leaue my customes olde
 I will contynewe and neuer wyll flake
 Thoughe I therfore my lyfe lose shoulde.

The Duke caused a greate iustynge to be
 Lordes came fro many a farre lande
 And Ladyes also that runnyng to fee
 He that shoulde be moſte doughtye of hande
 There was many a knyght full ſtronge
 That thought theyr clothes of full greate pryce
 Yet a gayne Roberte there myght none ſtande
 As for worship by hym woulde none ryſe.

A fyeelde was ordeyned bothe brode and wyde
 With lyſtes fayre where they ſhoulde runne
 Tentes were pyght on euery ſyde
 Greate was the people that thether come
 The daye was fayre, hote ſhone the ſonne [crye
 Greate trumpets blewe, the herauldes made theyr
 That euery knyght hys deuoune ſhoulde done
 For to proue who was moſte myghtye.

Knichtes

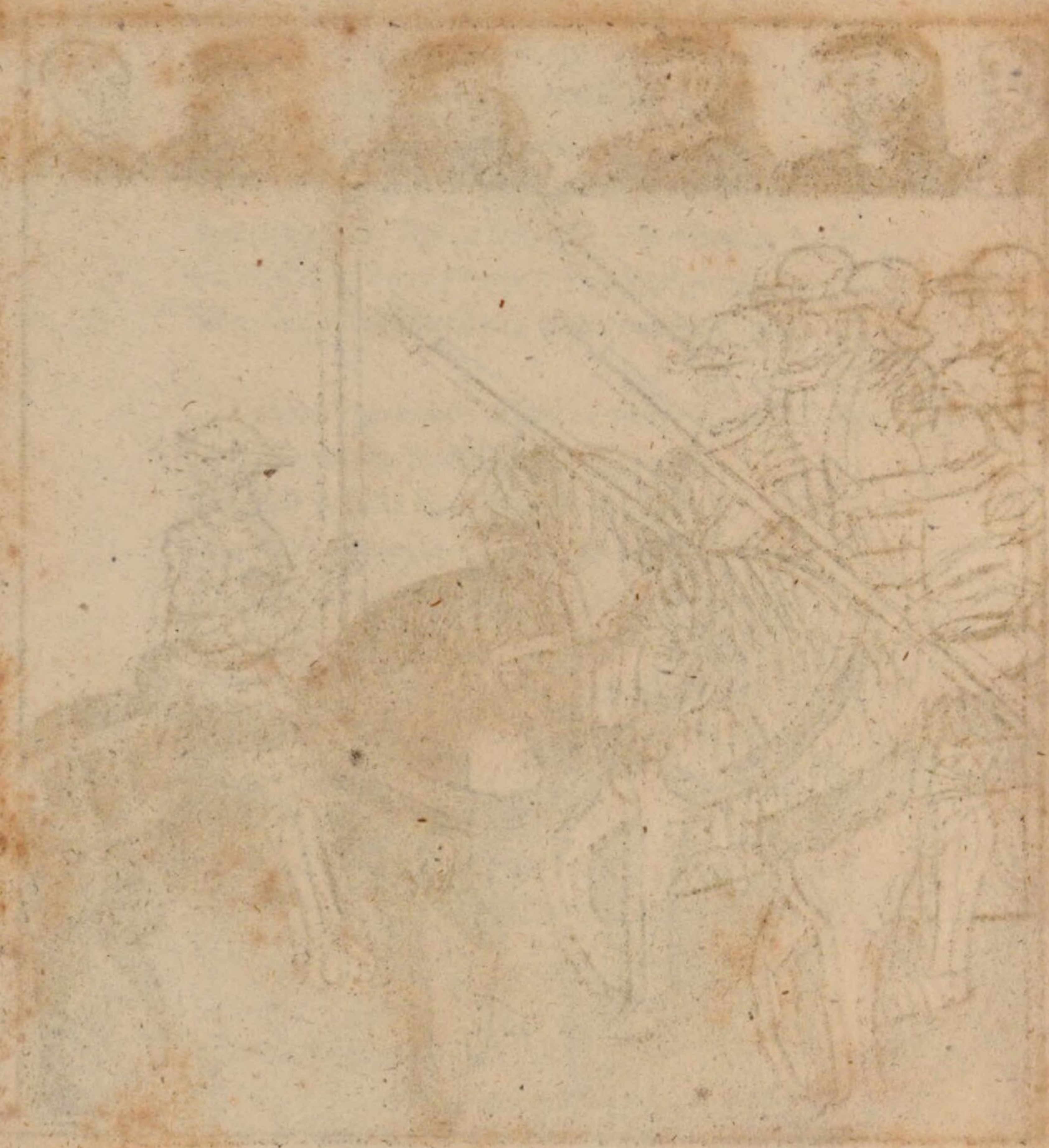
Knightes then dressed them to the fyelde
 In Syluer armoure fayre and bright
 Barons doughtye with speare and shylde [lyght
 With helmes and haubreks that all the fyelde dyd
 Stedes in trappoure the was a goodlye fyght
 Speare heades that a stronge cote woulde saylle
 Clothe of golde in harnes curyouslye pyght
 Worne of haburgin many a stronge mayle.

Robert the deuyll came in as meke as a Lyon
 In hys fyfte he had a greate speare
 Of sure wodde both toughe and longe
 Hys loke so grymme many men dyd feare
 Also that houghe staffe that he dyd beare
 Was almost as bygge as some twayne.
 Vnoccupied saide Robert why stande we here
 For to leaue all worke he woulde full fayne.

The Duke bade them all to begynne
 A fayre knyght then fentred hys speare
 In fayth sayde Robert I wyll runne to hym
 And lyghtly turned hys greate stede theare
 Eche agayne other speares dyd beare
 Those courfers dyd runne, they smote in the fyelde
 Hartye were bothe, nought dyd they feare
 That knyght smote Robert fore in the shyelde.

That





That the stroke made Robert right wrothe
 To hym he thought for to ryde agayne
 He fentred hys speare, and forthe he gothe
 With hys shyelde Robert mette playne
 And stroke so soore that he smote it euen in twayne
 And throughe the knyghtes shulder the speare dyd
 I trowe therof Robert was fayne [runne
 And asked yf any more woulde come.

Another knyght thought Robert to assaylle
 So yode they together with greate raundone
 Loth were they bothe for to fayle
 And hastelye theyr stedes strongelye dyd runne
 So swyfte with strenght Robert dyd come
 That hys speare ran thorowe the knyghtes bodye
 And to the earthe dead fell he downe
 All men wondred of Robert trewlye.

The thyrde knyght to the grounde he smote
 And brake hys horse backe asonder
 There was none that myght stande a stroke
 Of hym that daye, nowe the people dyd wonder
 To se that all knyghtes to hym were vnder
 For so soore Robert dyd them assayle [thonder
 A man had ben as good to haue be smytten with
 As to haue a stroke of hys hand without fayle.

Thre

Thre noble Barons he flewe there that daye
 He fared as he had ben a fyende of hell
 All was in earneste, and not in playe
 Fro theyr horses many knyghtes he fell
 And brake theyr armes as the bokes do tell
 For he threwe so grefelye and soore
 That they knewe nother wo nor well
 On stedes myght they ryde never more.

All that he mette, he them downe threwe
 Yonge nor olde he spared none
 For pittye had he no more than a Jue
 That daye he hurte there many a one
 And lyke a boore at the mouth he dyd some
 He fought and stroke all while that he was able
 In peace he woulde not haue them to stande alone
 He loued murderers that were euer Vengeable.

To kill and Slea was all hys delyght
 Tenne noble stedes backes he dyd bruff
 When that he at theyr masters dyd smyte
 Or with hys speare at them dyd thrust
 To fight euer more and more he had lust
 For all hys pleasure was in deathe sett
 And euer he cryed who wyll more iuste
 The deuyll was in hym no man myght hym lette.

And

And whan hys father sawe howe in vengeaunce
He was sett, and woulde no sad wayes take
In hys thought he toke greate greuance
And bade that all the knyghtes shoulde departe
Eche theyr waye, and no more justes to make
Than Robert woulde not obey the commaundement
Of hys father, but sayd forowe shoulde awake
For then in myscheif he sett all hys ententte.

He woulde not go fro the battaylle
But hue and flewe on euery syde
The stronge knyghtes there he dyd assaylle
All the people fledde, they durst not abyde
The knyghtes all awaye dyde tyde
With lordes and Ladyes euerychone
Robert loughe whan he that spyed
Than thought he I will no more go home.

Than Robert rode into the countrey
And robbed and kylled many a one
Maydens and wyues he rauyshed pytteouslye
He pulled downe abbeyes and houses of stone
For all the Churches that he dyd by come
Thorowe that countrey of Normandye
By hys wyll there shoulde stande none
For all hys pleasure was in murder and robberye.

C

He

He brente houses and slewe yonge chyl dren
 Death vpon death was all hys lyfe
 The countrey complayned to hys father
 Howe theyr seruantes were slayne with Robertes
 Some sayde he hathe rauyshed my wyfe [knyfe
 And by oure doughters he hathe layne
 They prayed the Duke to stynte that stryfe
 Or to flee that lande they would full fayne.

The Duke wepte and sayde alas
 That euer I hym begate on woman
 My prayer vnto Jesu euer was
 For to sende me a chylde for I had none
 And nowe gode hath sente me one
 That maketh me full heauy and sad
 The Duches wayled and made great mone
 That from her mynde she was nye madde.

The Duke made hys seruantes to ryde
 To seke Robert in Cyttie and in towne
 Good watche was layde on euery fyde
 On holte and heath in fyelde and towne
 And in euery place that they dyd come
 The countrey Robert dyd curse and blame
 And prayed that he myght haue an yll death soone
 For he the ordre of knyghthode dothe shame.

With

With Robert at the last these men mette
 They sayde that he shoulde with them them goo
 All aboute Robert shortlye they sette
 One asked hym what he woulde doo
 Wylt thou go with vs, he sayde noo
 And drewe hys sworde and with them dyd fyght
 Full greate woundes he gaue one or twoo
 And all the resydue he put to flyght.

And all that he toke he put theyr eyes oute
 So bade them go seeke theyr way home
 And serued them all so withoute doute
 These poore men they made greate mone
 So Robert departed and lefte them alone
 And sayde tell my father that yt ys for hys sake
 Then these men in tyme to the courte came home
 And shewed what mastryes Robert dyd make.

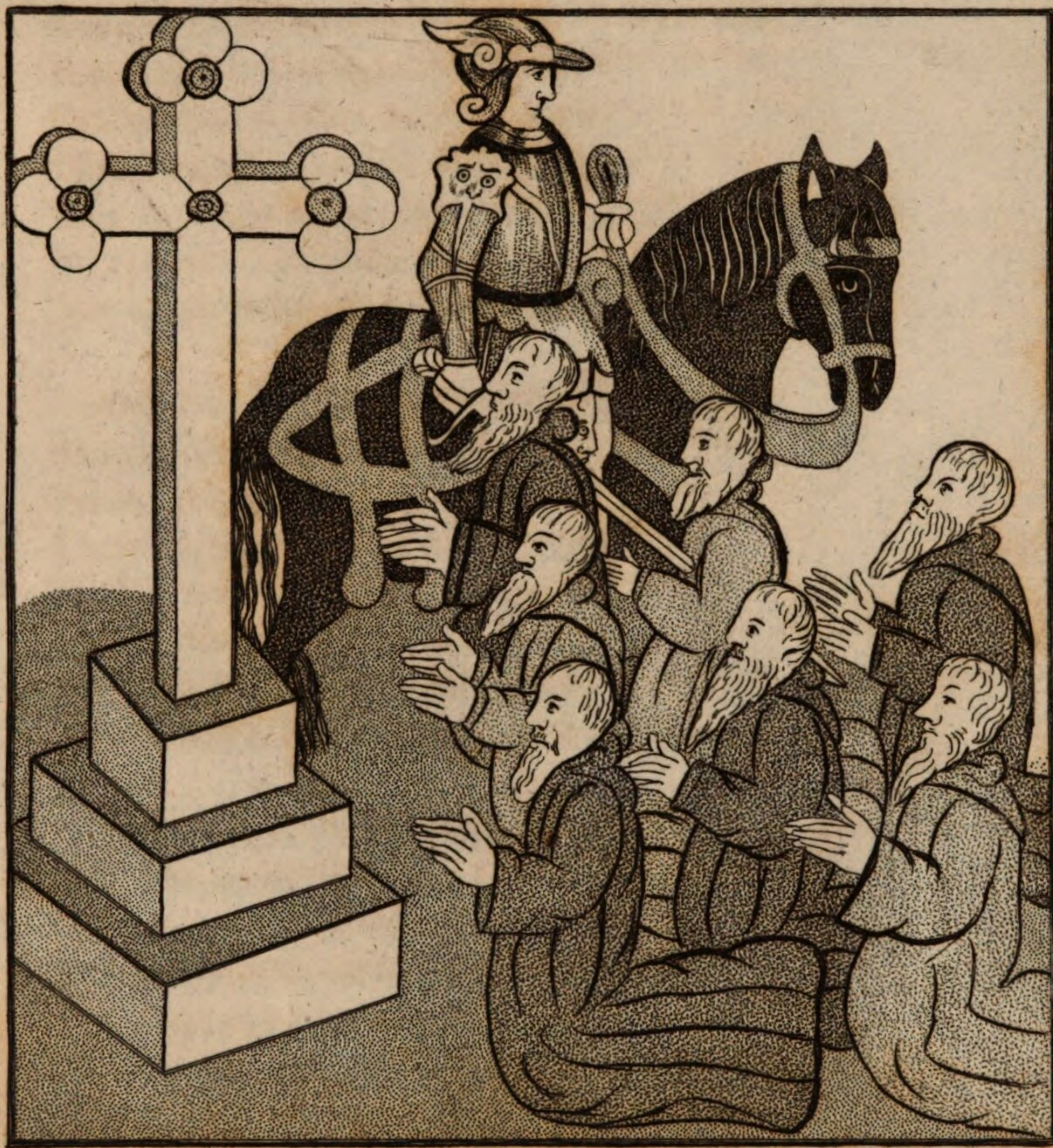
Thys good Duke in hearte was right wo
 When he sawe hys mennes eyes oute
 Fore angre he wyft not what to do
 But commaunded all the courte aboute
 Counstables and bayllifes with all theyr route
 All men to take hym who so maye
 And in pryson to put hym withoute doute
 He charged all men good watche to laye.

So when Robert knewe of thys warke
 He gathered a great companye theues yll
 He gate hym into a forrest full darke
 Where yt was farre from boroughe or hyll
 There he lyued and all dyd he kyll
 That he myght se in the heath so playne
 Corne and fruites all dyd he spyll
 In doynge myscheif allwaye was he fayne.

Yt was hys pleasure to eate fleshe on the frydaye
 A dogge dyd faste as well as he
 Poore pylgrymes he kyllled goynge by the waye
 And holy hermytes that lyued deuoutlye
 So on a daye he rose vppe earlye
 And in the forrest seuen hermytes he founde
 Before a crosse knelynge on theyr knee
 Of theyr prayers to heauen wente the sownde.

What holy whoresones he sayde be youe
 That gapeth vpwardes after the moone
 If ye be a thrust ye shall drynke nowe
 And oute he drewe hys swearde full soone
 The hermytes wyft no what to done
 But suffered death for Jesus sake [runne
 So throughe one of theyr bodyes hys sworde dyd
 For feare all the other dyd tremble and quake.

Than



Than he strake of theyr heades all
 And reioysed at that peryllouse dede
 In scorne he sayde, syrs do youe fall
 Patter and praye ye in youre crede
 Full faste these holy men dyd blede
 That Robertes clothes were readde as vermulon
 With hys sworde he thought further to spede
 In vengeaunce he rought not where he become.

Lo thys caytiffe was blynde and myght not see
 The cloudes had in clypped the Sunne of grace
 Lyke to an apple that the core dost putryfie
 The darke mystes of uice smote hym in the face
 He was none of the shepe of Israel but the kyd of
 He exyled pittye as dyd cruel Kynge Pharao [golyas
 Heaped full of synne, as euer he was
 That flewe hys own mother, men called hym Nero.

Then he leste these seuen hermytes deadde
 And rode oute of the wodde lyke a wylde dragon
 So lyke a bore he threwe vp hys headde
 The bloude of the hermytes couered all hys gowne
 A shepherde he sawe and rode to hym soone
 But whan the herdes man dyd hym espye
 Yt was no hede to bydde hym begone
 He ranne hys waye then for feare dyd he crye.

At

At the laste he the shepherde ouertoke in faye
 And asked what tydynges that he woulde tell
 The shepherd agayne to hym dyd faye [heh
 I was of youe afrayde I wende ye had come oute of
 And as for tydynges, here ys darkenes castell
 There lyeth the Duches of Normandy
 With many a lorde of her counsell
 Of all thys greate lande the royalltye.

So Robert came to the towne there the castell
 The people sawe one ryde as he had ben madde [stode
 With a sworde in hande, and all arayed in bloude
 To runne in to house euery man was gladde
 At the last Robert began to waxe sadde
 And sayde alas that euer he was borne
 In murder and myschief my lyfe haue I ladde
 Hys heere of hys heade he thought to haue torne.

Than he was a bashed soore in hys mode
 Whan that the people woulde hym not abyde
 What yt mente than he vnderstode
 Euery body them selfe from hym dyd hyde
 Than to the Castle gate Robert dyd ryde
 Ayd fayne with some body he woulde speake
 But whan any man hym espyede
 They ranne awaye as they dyd in the streate,

Than





Than with a heauy hearte downe dyd he lyght
 And went streyght into the Castell hall
 But when the people of hym had a sight
 None durst hym byde there at all
 Many for helpe dyd crye and calle
 Hys mother sawe hym as she fate at meate
 For feare she beganne to fall
 And hasted her awaye for to gette.

And when he sawe hys mother goynge
 He sayde alas Lady mother speake with me
 Hys hearte for sorowe brast in weepynge
 Whan he sawe her from hym so flee
 And sayde to hys mother full pitteouslye
 Lady tell me howe that I was borne
 That I haue ledde my lyfe so mischeuouslye
 In the tempests of uice with many a greate storme.

Hys mother all unto hym tolde
 Howe she gave hym to the fende both soule and bodye
 And he asked her howe she durste be so bolde
 To gyue hym from god allmightye
 I knowe he sayd that I haue lyued synfullye
 As euer dyd the emperoure greate Nero
 Amende I wyll and for mercye crye
 My dedes will I bewaylle wherfoeuer I go.

Hys.

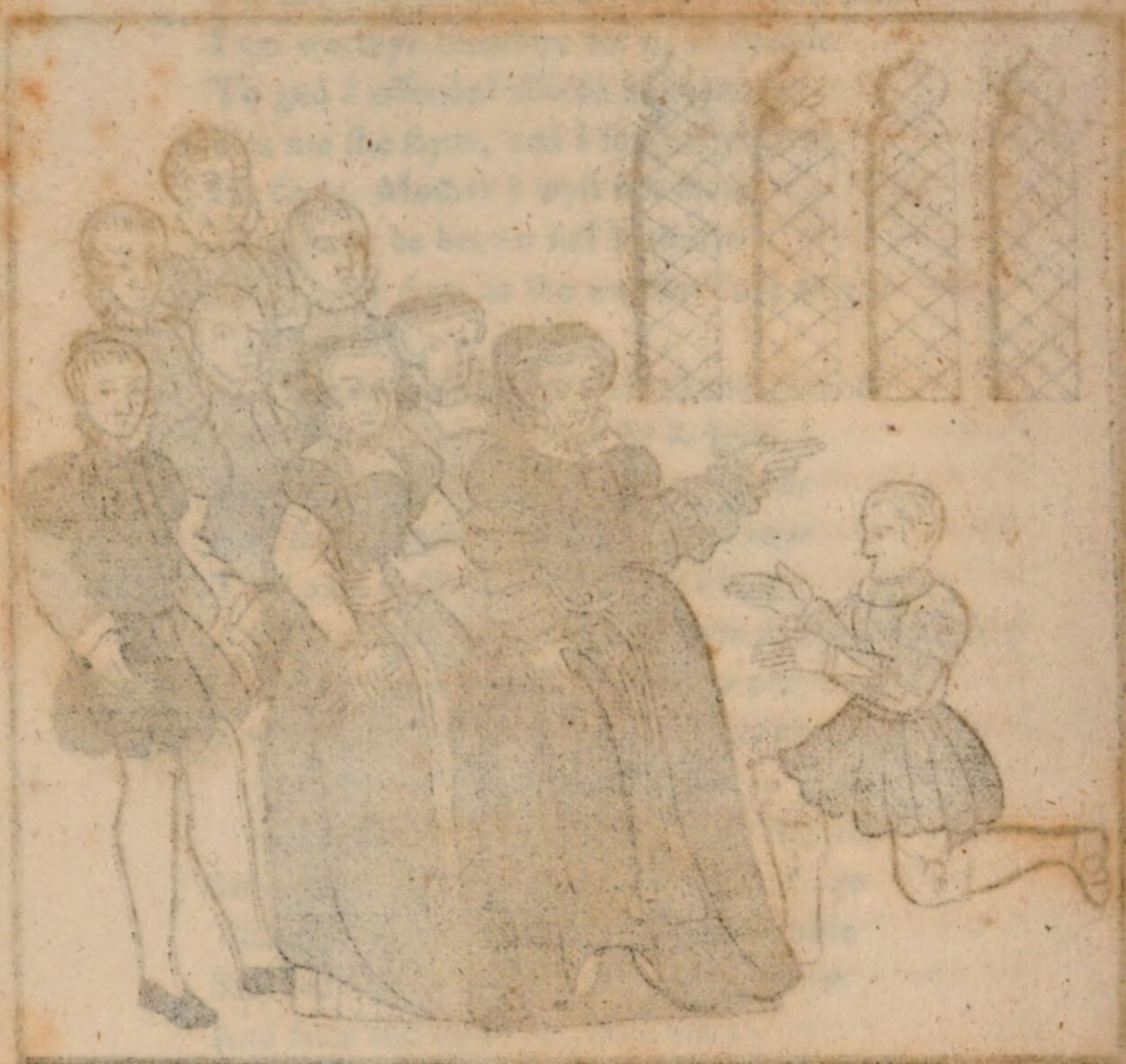
Hys mother prayed hym to smyte of her headde
For the trespase she sayde, that I dyd to thee
I am worthy therefore for to be deadde
To god I offended also in obstynacye
Slea me she sayde, and I forgiue yt thee,
He sayde, Mother I wyll not do so
I had leuer be beaten full bytterlye
And on my feate to the worldes ende to go,

Than for woo Robert fell to the grounde
And a greate whyle there he so laye
There sodenlye he rose in that stounde
And saide Mother nowe I go my waye
To Rome wyll I hye as fast as I maye
And prayed her to commende hym to hys father dere
So he desyred them all for hym to praye
And went forth with a full pytteous chere.

So shortly Robert toke hys horse and rode
Streight vnto the forrest to hys companye
Than the Duches that in the Castle abode
Shryked full sore with a full pytteous crye
And saide alas lorde to synfull am I
All women beware, curse neuer your chylde
And yf that ye do, then be youe in jeopardye
Also in myscheyff they shalbe defyelde.

Wyth





Wyth that the Duke came into the chaumber
 And asked her why she dyd wepe and wayle
 She sayde Robert youre sonne hath ben here [fayle
 And shewed how that he wolde to Rome without
 Ah, sayde the Duke, I feare yt wyll lyttell auayle
 He is not able to make restytucion
 Alacke sayd the Duke yet am I gladde fauns fayle
 That he ys wyllynge to make hys confession.

Nowe ys Robert come to the forrest agayne
 And founde hys men all at dyner syttyng
 To conuerte them to goodnes he would full fayne
 And sayde my felowes, with pytteous lamentyng
 Let vs remember oure synfull lyuyng
 And aske god mercy with greate repentaunce
 Yf we leade thys lyfe styll, yt will vs bryng
 To hell withoute ende, with horrible vengeaunce.

Let vs remember he saide our synfull lyfe
 We haue murdered people full cruellye
 Rauyshed maydens and many a wyfe
 Slayne prystes and hermytes full pytteouslye
 And abbeyes haue ben dystroyed through our robbery
 With Nunnes, Ankers, take yt in remembraunce
 Howe we put them in ieopardie
 Wherefore I dreade hell, with horrible vengeaunce.

D

Houses

Houses we haue brentte many a one
 And spylte of chyldren much precyous bloude
 Compassion there, nor pyttye had we none
 In myscheyff we delyted, and neuer in good
 And nowe let vs remember hym that dyed on the rode
 That from vs yet hath kept hys sworde by fufferaunce
 For and we nowe in deathes daunce stode
 To hell shoulde we go, with horrible vengeaunce.

One sayde Robert, what be youe there
 And stode up and began hym to skorne
 Will youe see fellowes : the fox wylbe an anker
 What master, ye be as wyfe as a shepe newe shorne
 I trowe youre buttocke be prycked with a thorne
 For your wytt ys oute of temperaunce
 I woulde not haue thys tearme aboute borne
 That we shoulde to hell go with horrible venge-
 [aunce.

Another thefe saide master Roberte, harke
 To preache to vs yt ys all in vayne
 And what I saye, I praye you yt marke
 Thys lyfe wyll we leade in wordes playne
 Euer yet in thefe workes we haue be fayne
 For our synne we entende not to do pennaunce
 We wyll not forsake thoughe ye stryue vs agayne
 To hell woulde we rather go with horrible vengeaunce.
 Than

Than Roberte sawe that they woulde not amende
 But in myscheyf there to lyue styll
 And to the poore men they wyll ofte offende
 Thus then he conspyred in hys wyll
 One after another for to kyll
 To make short he kyllled them euerychone
 He sayde ye haue be readye euer to do euyll
 Therefore alyue wyll I not leaue one.

He tolde them a good seruaunte must haue good
 Nowe do I paye youe after your deseruyng [wages
 There dead in the floore all theyr bodyes sprayles
 Robert shutt the doore and they laye within
 And sayde of myscheyf this ys the endynge
 So he thought to sett the house on fyre
 But he dyd not, he yede a waye fighynge
 And sayd alas I haue payde my men theyr hyre.

Than Robert toke hys horse and blessed hym
 So throughe the forrest he toke the waye
 Ouer hylles and downes fast rydynge
 Thus rode he styll all a longe daye
 And ofte for synne he cryed well awaye
 Than of an abbaye he had a fight
 Whiche ofte he had robbed in good faye
 Alas saide Robert there will I lodge to nyght.

For faulte of meate then he hongred fore
 And sayde to eate fayne I wolde haue some
 Alacke nowe that euer I was bore
 And when the monkes dyd se hym come
 Eche man hys waye fast dyd ronne
 And saide here cometh the furyous serpent
 Roberte, which ys I trowe a deuyls sonne
 That in murmer and myscheif hath a greate talent.

Than forthe he rode to the churche dore
 And discended from his horse right there
 So he kneled downe in the floore
 And to oure lorde god he made hys prayer
 Sayinge, swete Jesu that bought me dere
 Haue mercy on me for that precyous bloude.
 That ran from your hearte with longis speare
 Which stonge youe in the side hangyng on the roode.

Then vp he rose and went to the Abbot
 And sayde to hym with pitteouse lamentyng
 I haue bene so symple father, that ye well wot
 That nowe I feare the sworde that ys lyghtly comyng
 Of our lordes vengeance for my false lyuyng
 And of all that I haue offended vnto youe
 Forgeue me for hys loue that was hangyng [bowed.
 Seuen houres on the crosse and there hys head dyd
 And





And when they hearde hym pitteouslye complayne
 And in hys harde hearte toke repentaunce
 The monckes all thereof were fayne
 So there he tolde them all in substaunce
 Howe he was in wyllynge to suffer pennaunce
 And to Rome to take hys Journeye
 So there he called to hys remembraunce
 Of hys lodge and therof toke the abbot the keye.

Thys keye to the Abbot there he toke
 And tolde hym that he shoulde haue all the treasure
 In the theues lodge yf that he woulde loke
 That he had robbed synce the fyrst houre
 And saide my meynye lyen dead in the floore
 The Abbot he prayed to geue hys father the keye
 For I wyll not slepe one night where I do another
 Tyll I in Rome with the pope speke maye.

And praye my father to make restytucion
 For me to all them that I dyd offende
 I crye hym mercy also I am hys sonne
 Hym for to myscheif also I dyd entende
 But what thoughe, nowe I trust to amende
 There Robert toke hys leaue of all the hole couent
 Hys horse and hys sworde he to hys father sende
 And so departed and on hys feete forthe wentte.

Than

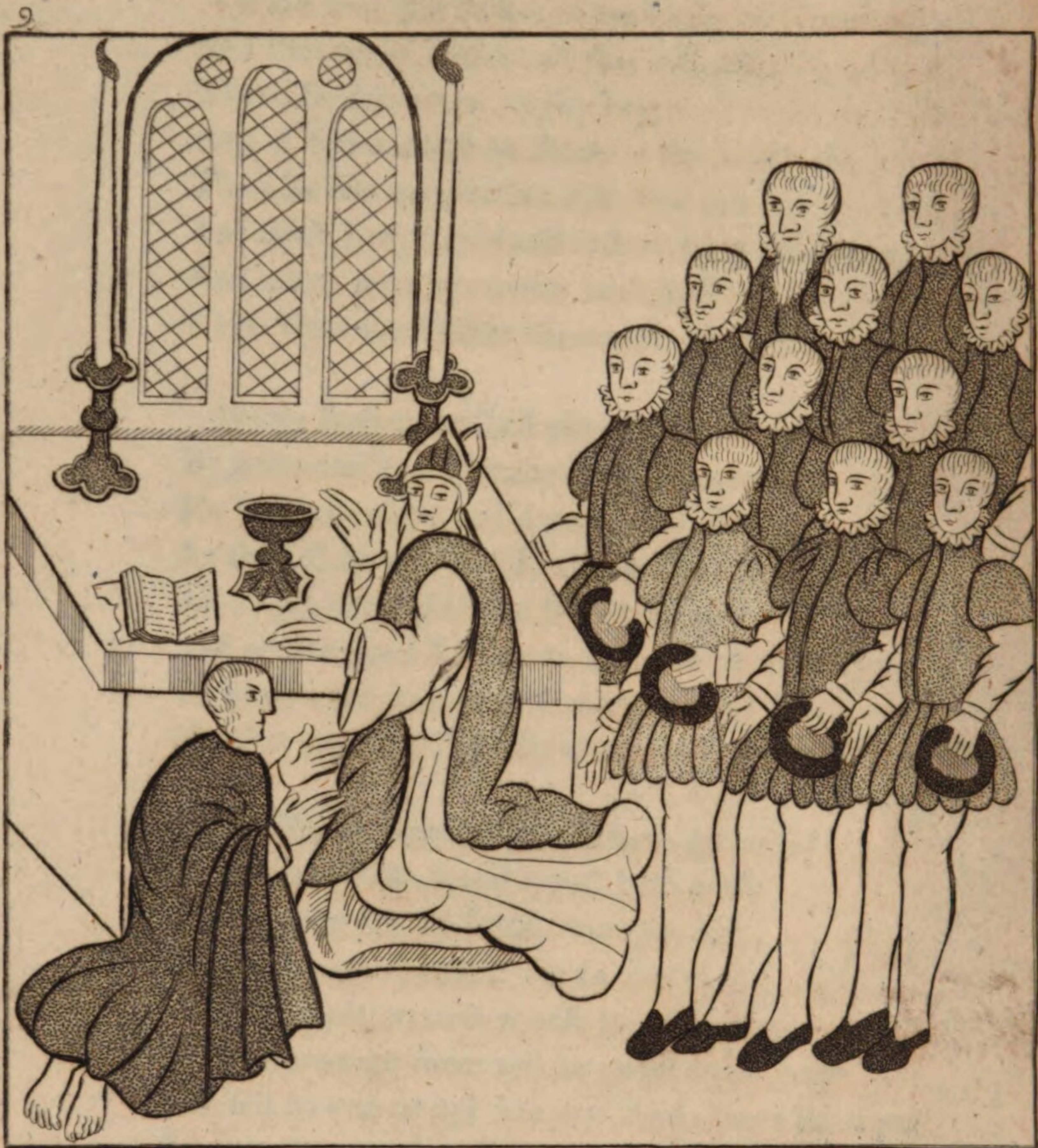
Than rode the Abbot to the Duke of Normandye
And shewed of Robert all that was befall
There he delyuered vp the keye
And of hys entente he sheowid the Duke all
Then he hys men before hym dyd call
And sayde I wyll ryde and restore the goodes agayne
And euery man hys owne haue shall
Then were the Dukes seruantes all fayne.

Nowe Robert walked ouer dale and hyll
By holte and heath, many a wery waye
He laboured night and daye euer styll
At the last he came to Rome on Sherethursdaye
All nyght poorely in the streate he laye
And on the good frydaye to church he went tywis
Towardes the quyre and nothyng dyd saye
For that daye the Pope sayed all the seruyce;

The Popes seruantes bade hym go backe
They smote Robert and thrust hym asyde
Tho to hym self he sayde, oute alacke
Yet he thought boldlyer for to abyde
Where people were thynnest there he espyed
So prest amonge them tyll he came to the pope
And fell downe to hys fete and loude there he cryed
As rayne the teares fell fro hys eyes god wotte.

The





Roberte the Deuyll.

31

The popes seruantes would haue pulled hym asyde
Oure holy father, yet aunswered naye
Medle not with hym, lett hym abdyde
That I maye here what he dothe saye;
Robert aunswered I am here thys daye
The synfullest lyuer that euer was founde
Synce Adam was made in Canaan of claye
I am the greatest synner that lyued on grounde.

The pope sayde what art thou good frende
And whye makest thoue thys lamentacon
Oh good father saide Robert to god I haue offended
I desyre youe to heare my confession
Of my greate synnes the abhomynacon
On them to muse yt ys vnumerable
Vice and I rested all waye in one habytacion
With murder and euery vnthryfte culpable.

Art thou Robert the deuyll sayde the pope than
That ys the worst creature of all the worlde yll
Yee yee syr sayde Robert I am the same man
Greate myscheyf haue I do, and muche yll
As to robbe and slea, both burne and kyll
The pope sayd, here in goddes name I thee warne
By uertue of hys passion stande here styll
Do to me nor my men no maner of harme.

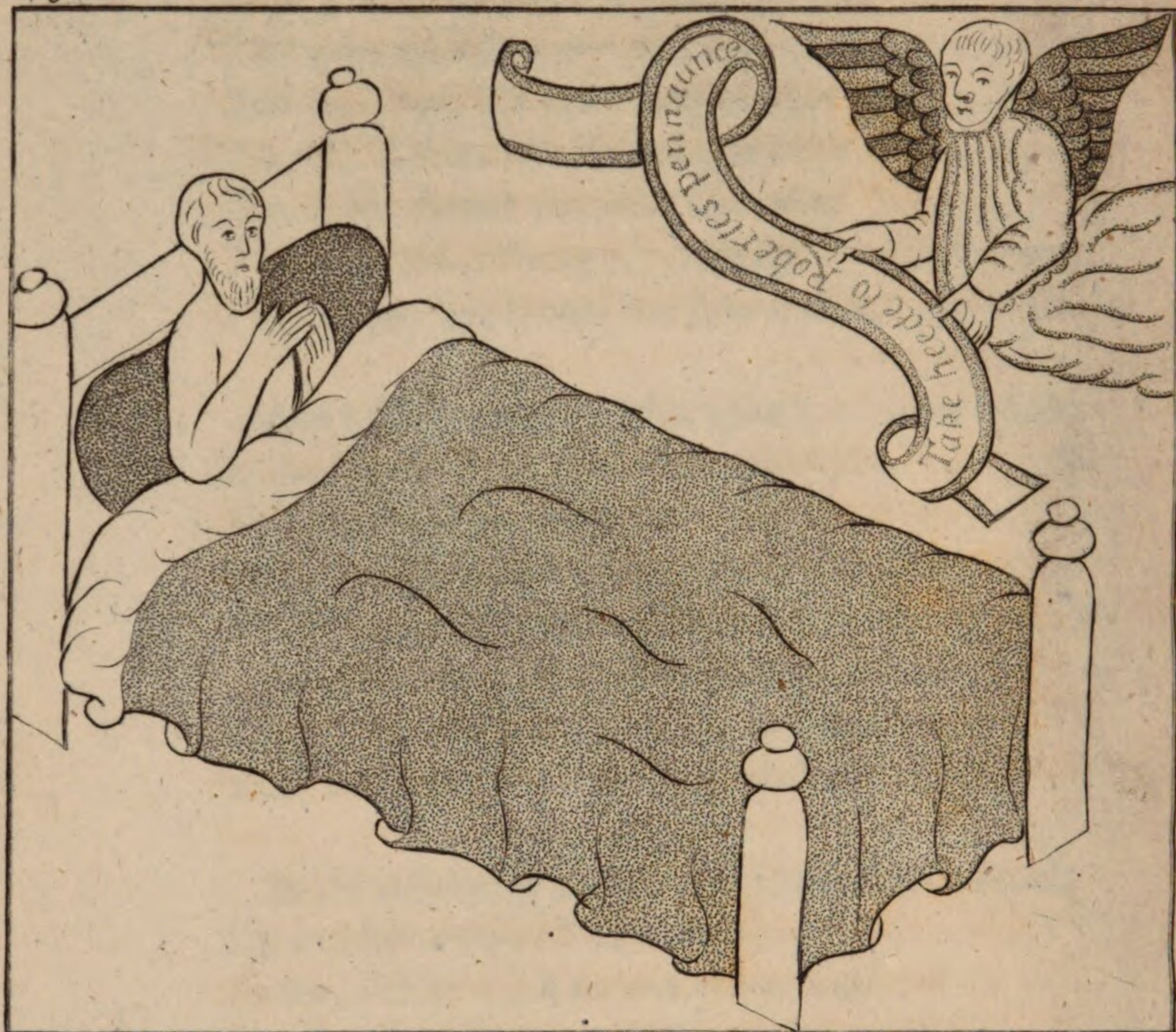
Naye

Naye naye sayde Robert, neuer chrysten man
 Wyll I hurte by night nor daye
 The pope toke hym by the hande than
 And bade hym hys confession to hym saye
 Thereto Robert woulde not saye naye
 But all hys synnes confessed and tolde
 The pope whan he hym hearde dyd quake for fraye
 For to heare hys synnes hys hearte waxed nye colde.

And tolde howe hys mother gaue hym to the feende
 In the houre of hys fyrst contemplacyon [of hell
 The pope sayd Robert I thee tell
 Thou must go to an hermyte three miles withoute the
 Robert sayde with good will thys shalbe done [towne
 Then wente he to the popes goostlye father
 The pope commaunded hym so to done
 That the hermyte might hys confession heare.

In the mornynge Robert walked ouer hyll and dale
 He was full werye of his labourynge
 At the laste he came in to a greate vale
 And founde fame hermyte standinge
 He spake with the hermyte, and shewed of hys lyuynge
 And tolde that he was sente fro the pope of Rome
 But when that holy man hearde hys confession
 He sayed brother ye be right wellcome.

And



And for youre synnes euer youe muste be sorye
 For as yet I will not affoylle youe
 In a lyttell chappell all nyght shall youe lye
 Do ye as I do youe counsell nowe
 Aske god mercye, and let youre hearte bowe
 For all thys nyght I wyll wake and praye
 Vnto oure lorde, that I maye knowe
 Yf in saluacion ye do stande in the waye.

So they departed, the hermyte fell on slepe
 An aungell sodenlye to hym dyd appeare
 And saide to Goddes commaundement take good kepe
 And of Robertes pennaunce thou shalt heare,
 He muste counterfeyt a fole in all manere
 The meate that he shall eate, he muste pull yt from
 And neuer to speake, but as he dombe weare [a dogge
 Thys pennaunce done, he shalbe forgeuen of god.

The hermyte with that shortlye dyd awake
 And called Robert, and spaeke to hym [take
 And saide heare nowe the pennaunce that ye shall
 God commaundeth the to counterfet a foole in all
 thinge
 Meate none to eate, withoute a dogge do yt brynge
 To the in hys mouth, then muste thou yt eate
 No worde to speake, but as bdombe euer beyng
 With dogges euery nyght also thou must sleepe.

E

The

The hermyte said, tyll thy synnes be forgeue
Thou must do as I haue here sayde
With thys sharpe pennaunce thou must lyue
Tyll god of hys debtes by the be payde
Forget not thys, in thy hearte let it be layde
At the last god wyll sende the worde agayne
Robert wepte as thoughe he shoulde haue dyed
And sayde thys pennaunce will I do full fayne.

The hermyte bade hym remember althyng
And whan thy synnes be cleane forgeuen the
By an Aungell god wyll sende the warnyng
Nowe maye thou no longer byde with me
Robert blessed the hermyte then trewlye
So eche toke theyr leaue of other
Nowe god for euer be wyth the
He sayd to Robert, nowe farewell brother.

There poore Robert departed fro the hermyte
And blessed hym and agayne went to Rome
For to do hys pennaunce in the strete
And whan that he thether was come
Lyke as he had ben a foole he dyd ronne
And lepte and daunced from one syde to another
Many folke laughed at hym soone
And wende he had ben a foole, they knew none other.

Boyes

Boyes folowed hym throughe the strete
 Castyng styckes and stones at hym
 And some with roddes hys bodye dyd beate
 The chyldren made greateshout and cryenge
 Burges of the cyttie at Robert laye laughyng
 Oute of theyr wyndowes to se hym playe
 The boyes threwe dyrte and myre at hym
 Thus contynewed Robert manye a daye.

Thus he played the foole on a season
 He came on a tyme to the Emperours Courte
 And sawe that the gate stode all open
 Robert ranne into the hall and beganne to worke
 So daunced and lepte and aboute so starte
 At the laste the Emperoure had pyttie on hym
 Howe he taere hys clothes and gnew hys shyfte
 And bade a seruaunte meate hym for to brynge:

Thys seruaunte brought Robert plentye of meate
 So proferde hyt hym and saide go dyne
 Robert sate styll he woulde not eate
 Yet god wotte hys belly greate pyne
 At last the Emperoure sayde yonder ys a hounde of myne
 And bade hys seruaunte throwe hym a bone
 So he dyd, and whan Robert yt had spyne
 Alack thought Robert, he shall not eate yt alone.

He lept from the table and with the dogge faught
And all for to haue the bone awaye
The hounde at the last by the fyngers hym caught
So styll in hys mowthe he kepte hys praye,
Whan Robert sawe that, downe he laye
The dogge gnewe the one ende and Robert the other
The Emperoure laughed whan he that sawe
And sayde the dogge and he fought harde together.

The Emperoure sawe that he was hongrye
And bade to throwe the dogge a hole losse
Whan Robert sawe that he was glad greatlye
For to lose hys parte he was right lothe,
And agayne to the dogge he goeth
So brake the losse a sonder and to the hounde
He gaue the one halfe to faye the sothe
And ate the other as the dogge dyd on the grounde.

The Emperoure saide, syth that I was borne
Sawe I neuer a more foole naturall
Nor suche an ydeot sawe I neuer beforne
That had leuer eate that that to the dogge dyd fall
Rather then that that was proffered hym in the hall
Than Robert toke hys staffe and smote at forme and
stile

What sorowe was in hys hearte they knewe not all
There men were gladde to see hym playe the foole.

At





At the last Robert went into a garden
 And there he founde a fayre fountayne
 He was a thurst and whan he had dronken
 He wente in to hys dogge agayne
 To folowe hym euer he was fayne
 Thus vnder a stayre at nyght laye the hounde
 And euer hys pennaunce Robert dyd not dysdayne
 Allwaye hys bed was with the dogge on the grounde.

Whan the Emperoure espyed hym lye there
 Fett hym a bed to a man dyd he saye
 And lett yt be layed for hym under the stayre
 So they dyd and Robert poynted as naye
 And woulde have them to beare the bed awaye
 Then they fett hym an arme full of strawe
 And therupon by hys dogge he laye
 All men marueyled that yt sawe.

Muche myrth and sporte he made euer amonge
 And as the Emperoure was at dyner on a daye
 A Jue fate at the borde, that greate rowme longe
 In that house beare, and was receyued all waye
 Than Roberte hys dogge toke in hys armes in faye
 And touched the Jue and he ouer hys sholder loked
 backe

Robert fet the dogges ars to hys mowth without naye
 Full soore the Emperoure loughe whan he sawe that.

Robert

Robert sawe a bryde that shoulde be maryed
 And soone he toke her by the hande
 So into a foule donge myxen he her caryed
 And in the myre he let her stande
 The Emperoure stode and behelde hym longe
 At the last Robert toke a quicke Catte
 And ranne into the kechyn amonge the thronge
 And threwe her quicke into the beefe potte.

Lordes and barons loughe that they coulde not
 To see hym make myrth withoute harme [stande
 They saide he was the meryest in all that lande
 With that a messenger the Emperoure dydwarne
 That aboute rome was many a Sarasyne
 And saide the Seneschall hathe gathered a great armye
 Because ye wyll not let your daughter haue hym
 He purposeth all Rome for to dystroye.

Thys Emperoure had a doughter that coulde not
 The whiche the Seneschall loued as hys lyfe [speake
 And ofte with the Emperoure he dyd treate
 For to haue her vnto hys wyfe
 And for that cause the Seneschall made thys stryfe
 Because the Emperoure in nowise woulde
 Geue hym hys doughter, he swere ofte sythe
 Maugre hys head wyne her he shoulde.

The





The Emperoure heard of the Sarasyns that were
 For to dystroye theyr chrystyan Countrey [come
 He made a crye in greate Rome
 That younge and olde shoulde make readye
 As manye as were betwene fyftene and syxtye
 Lordes barons and knyghtes drewe out of euery cost
 With an houghe companye and a myghtye
 They thought for to Fell the Sarasyns greate hoste.

So forth withall bothe these hostes mette
 Wyth weapons bright and stedes stronge
 So with soore strokes together they sette
 Theyr speares braste in peces longe
 Many a doughtye was slayne in that thronge
 Greate horses stamped in yron wedes
 Oure chrysten men were put to the wronge
 With woundes depen that full sore bledes.

Oure lorde on hys seruantes had compassion
 And sent an Aungell with horse and armure
 Vnto Robert as he dranke in the garden
 There the Aungell bade hym arme hym fure [dure
 And saide bestryde thys good stede that longe will en-
 And in all haste go ryde and helpe the Emperoure
 Alacke thought Robert nede hath no cure
 Than rode he forth the space of an houre.

He

He rode into the thickest of the fyeelde
 And hue and flewe of the Sarafyns a greate nombre
 No steele nor harburgyn that with hym helde
 Hys dentes rouges as yt had ben thonder
 He smote mennes bodyes cleane a sonder
 Hys sworde made many a head to blede
 That the Emperoure had greate wonder
 What knyght yt was that he sawe so doughtye in
 [dede.

With the helpe of god and Robert that knyght
 That daye the Sarafyns losse the fyeelde
 And whan that ended was that fyght
 Euery man houered and behelde
 Where that whyte knyght was that wepon dyd welde
 But Robert wente into the garden
 And layde downe bothe harnes and shyld
 Yt vanyshed a waye, he wyft not where yt became.

And all thys sawe the Emperours doughter
 That the Aungell brought Robert the whyte stede
 And howe at the welles fyde he dyd of all hys armure
 Therof she had greate maruayle in dede
 At the last the Emperours men dyd of theyr wede
 And came to dyner into theyr lordes hall
 The Emperoure said this daye Jesu dyd vs spede
 And the white knyght sayre must hym befall.

Than

Than Robert came in lyke a foole playinge
 Into the hall, and leapte from place to place
 The Emperoure was glad to se Robert daunsynge
 Than he spyed a great race of bloude in Robertes face
 But that he gate when he in the battayle was
 The Emperoure wende that hys seruantes had hurt
 And saide, there ys some rybaude in this place [hym so
 That hath hurte my Robert, that no harm can do.

The Emperoure asked whether that whyte knyght
 Hys lordes aunswered, we can not saye [was gone
 At the last hys doughter that was bothe deafe and
 Euer she poynted to Robert allwaye [dombe
 Her father wondred at her in good saye
 And asked her mystres, what hys doughter ment
 She said, she meaneth that Robert thys daye [dente.
 Holpe youe to wynne the fyelde with hys doughty

Her mystres said that Robertes greate bloudye race
 Your doughter meaneth he had it in the fyelde
 At her wordes the Emperoure asshamed was
 And waxed angrie and that hys doughter behelde
 He saide thys folysh mayde thynketh he fought in the
 He bade her mestres teache her more better [fielde
 Far and she will not wyser be in her elde
 A foole shall she dye, there maye no man let her.

F

Than

Than the seconde tyme the Sarasins came to Rome
 And with the Emperoure fought afore fyelde
 The Aungell agayne to Robert dyd come
 And then he rode forth hys weapon to welde
 He perished brestplates and many ashyld
 He strooke of bothe legge and arme
 The Emperoure that knyght agayne behelde
 To watche for hym hys men he dyd warne.

But he was gone they wyft not whether
 So on the morowe an other fyelde was pyght
 The Emperoure charged euery man to do his endeuer
 For to haue knowen that whyte knyght
 So on the morowe that they shoulde fyght
 Syxe knyghtes laye in a woode preuelye and styll
 They sayde we wyll of that noble man haue a fight
 And to our lorde brynge hym we wyll.

On the morowe the sunne shone bright
 Bothe partyes there was assembled
 All the fyelde gaue a greate lyght
 Of the gleyues that glyftred, the stedes trembled
 A wonder to heare the brydles that gyngled
 With arbelaters they shot many a quarell
 All the grounde of the noyse rombled [well.
 Throughe the helpe of Robert the Chrysten men sped
 That

That daye Robert proued hym doughtye of hande
 Manye fro theyr horses downe he dyd shlynge
 None was able hys dente for to with stande
 There men myght heare greate rappes ryng
 The noyse of gunnes made such a bellowyng
 All the fyelde fowned as yt had ben thonder
 Of bloude greate gutters they myght se runnyng
 And many a knyghtes head cleft a sonder.

All Sarafyns fled, the chrysten won the fyelde
 Robert rode awaye than full pryuelye
 The knyghtes in the wodde hym behelde
 And lowde vnto hym beganne to crye
 Syr knyght speake with vs for thy courtesye
 Robert thought not agayne to turne
 The other knyghtes rode after hastelye [runne.
 And smote theyr horses with spores and after dyd

Roberte ranne ouer dale and hyll
 Hys stede was good that he had there
 A bolde knyght folowed after hym styll
 And into the reste he threwe hys speare
 So strongelye to Robert he hyt beare
 To haue slayne hys horse, and smote hym in the thye
 The speare head brast, and in hys legge bode there
 Than was thys gentle knyght full soorye.

Backe agayne rode than thys knyght so bolde
And shewed the Emperoure that he was gone agayne
There of hys speare heade he hym tolde
To see hym quod the Emperoure I woulde full fayne
Than throughe all hys lande he dyd proclayme
That he that woulde shewe the greate wounde with
the speare head
Shoulde haue hys doughter, and not her layne
Vnto hys wyfe her for to wedde.

When the Seneschall hearde the proclamacion
He made hymself a greate wounde throughe the thye
So gate a speare and whyte armoure soone
And so rode to the Emperoure with all hys meynye
And said Syr Emperoure that valyaunt knyght am I
That faued youe thre tymes fro grame
The Emperoure said to hym, thou art not lykelye
And bade hym holde hys peace for shame

At last the Seneschall shewed hym hys wounde
And said, beholde thys and the head of the speare
The Emperoure was abashed in that stounde
So there he gaue the Seneschall hys doughter
And on the morowe he shoulde be maryed vnto her
So was the Emperoure by hym beguyled
He wende verelye that he had ben there
And fought in the fiede as a knyght doughted.

On





On the morowe thys greate weddyng shoulde be
That the Seneschall shoulde haue hys doughter
And so brought her to churche, the seruyce began
There by myrakle thys lady spake to her father [ready
And saide thys traytoure he hath beguyled youe here
For Robert was he that helpe you in the fyelde
I sawe an Aungell brynge hym bothe shylde and speare
With these two wordes downe on her knees she kneled.

And the Emperoure whan he sawe hys daughter
For ioye he was nere oute of hys mynde [speake
And thanked god for that myracle greate
Than the Seneschall with shame shranke behynde
So to the Pope the Emperoure dyd wynde
The mayde tolde the Pope what Robert had done
And brought them to the welle the speare head to fynde
And betwene two stones she espyed yt sone.

[greate

Than went to seke Robert bothe lordes and ladyes
At the laste they founde hym lye vnder the stayre
Amonge the dogges and with them dydde eate
They desyred hym to speake with wordes fayre
But he made signes as he coulde not heare
With that came an hermyte & toke hym by the sleue
Sent thether by god he was hys goostlye father
And bade hym speake, sayinge hys synnes were forgaue.
Yet

Yet was he afearde to speake, and durst not
 The Emperoure prayed hym to se hys thye
 Robert woulde not heare, but whan he sawe the Pope
 He ranne and played hys tauntes about lyghtlye
 The pope bade hym speake for the loue of Marye
 Robert hym scorned and gaue hym hys bleffynge
 He woulde not breake hys pennaunce, he had leuer dye
 Then the hermyte bade hym speake, forgeuen is thy
 [synne.

With that Robert fell downe on hys knee
 And thanked Jesu that forgauē hym hys myflyuynge
 The pope and the Emperoure were glad trewlye
 But most of all that ladye made reioysynge
 That was the Emperours doughter that yongelynge
 Desyrynge her father that she myght Robert wedde
 For thy askynge said he, I gyue the my bleffynge
 In all the haste daughter yt shalbe spedde.

Than Robert maryed the Emperours doughter
 A feast was holde of great solempnytie
 Eche of them were full gladde of other
 And at the last when ended was thys ryaltye
 He toke leaue of the Emperoure and to hys owne
 He yede for the imp hys father was dead [countrey
 Also a false knyght put hys mother in greate ieopardye
 Whych Robert at the laste hynge by the headde.

With



With hys mother he mette in the cyttye of Rome
 The Duches was then glad and blythe
 That Robert her sonne so vertuous was come home
 Whiche in hys youthe lyued so myscheuous a lyfe
 Than all men loued hym, both mayde and wyfe
 Tyll it befell vpon a certayne daye
 A messenger came from the Emperoure full swythe
 And prayed hym to come to Rome in all the hast he
 maye

He tolde that the Seneschall had greate warre
 With hys lorde the Emperoure in dede
 Robert sent after men nye and farre
 In all the haste thether he gan spede
 But ere he came was done a myscheuous dede
 The Seneschall the Emperoure had slayne
 For sorowe Robertes hearte dyd blede
 In fyelde he woulde haue fought full fayne.

The Seneschall hearde that Robert was come
 And purposed for to mete hym in the fyelde
 He reared up many a black Sarason
 With wepon stronge bothe speare and shyelde
 So ether partyes other behelde
 And fought together a greate batteyll
 There Robert with hys handes the Seneschall kylde
 So to hys countrey returned without fayle.

And

And whan he came agayne to Normandye
He dreade euer god and kepte hys lawe
So lyued he full deuoutelye
For all thyng he woulde he do vnder awe
And punyshe Rebelles both hange and drawe
Than was he called the seruaunte of god
No thefe woulde he saue that he myght knowe
For dreade of goddes righteousnes the sharpe rodde

One chylde by the Emperours doughter he had
That was a knyght with Kinge charles of Fraunce
In manfull dedes he hys lyfe ladde
Doughty he was bothe with speare and launce
Lo, thy Robert ended hys lyfe in pennaunce
And whan he dyed hys soule went to heauen hye
Nowe all men beare these in remembraunce
He that lyueth well here, no euyl death shall dye

Yonge and olde that delyteth to reade in storye
Yt shall youe styrre to uertuous lyuyng
And cause some to haue theyr memorye
Of the paynes of hell, that ys euer duryng
By readyng booke men knowe all thyng
That euer was done, and hereafter shall be
Idlenes to myscheif many a one doth bryng
And specyally as we daylye may see.

Take

Take youe ensample of thys story olde
Howe that he in youth dyd greate vengeance
In doyng myscheife he was euer bolde
Tyll god sent to hym good remembraunce
And after that he toke suche repentaunce
That he was called the seruaunte of god by name
And so contynued without varyaunce
God geue vs grace that we may do the same.

Here endeth the lyfe of
Robert the Deuyll.



Robert the Bruce

11

To the young champion of the Holy Cross
I have sent him in youth and prime of years
In days of merriment he was a knight
Till God sent to him good counsel
And after that he took the cross
That he was called the champion of God he was
And he conquered without weapons
God gave us grace that we may do the same

There endeth the life of
Robert the Bruce



Roberte the Devyll A metrical romance from an ancient illuminated manuscript

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